

**MINUTE SUMMARY OF THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
AUGUST 27, 2014
7:00 PM**

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

Answering the roll call were: Forrest Lee, Kilberg, Halva, Carr, Platteter, Hobbs, Staunton

Members absent from roll: Scherer, Olsen and Schroeder

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Commissioner Platteter moved approval of the meeting agenda. Commissioner Carr seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

IV. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Carr moved approval of the July 9 2014, meeting minutes with one correction. Commissioner Platteter seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

v. COMMUNITY COMMENT

Jim Grotz, 5513 Park Place and John Crabtree, 5408 Oaklawn addressed the Commission on residential redevelopment issues.

VI. REPORTS RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Living Streets Plan Update

Update

Chair Staunton welcomed Mark Nolan, Edina Transportation Planner to speak to the Commission on "Living Streets".

Mr. Nolan reported in August 2013 the City Council approved a "Living Streets" policy for the City of Edina. Nolan said since that time City staff and members of the community have worked together through branding and outreach to develop a plan and establish guidelines. Nolan asked the Commission to note the following benefits of having a "Living Streets" policy/plan:

- Safety

- Public Health and the Environment
- Transportation Choice
- Economic Benefits; and
- Community Identity.

With the aid of graphics Nolan noted street types; local street, local connector, collector street and minor arterial and highlighted design plans for each. Nolan said some of the steps in the plan would include design guidelines for vehicular facilities, pedestrian facilities, bicycle facilities, traffic calming and storm water management. Continuing, Nolan did note that in the appropriate circumstances the City may consider narrowing streets; those streets with sidewalks to 24-feet and without sidewalks 27-feet. Another theory would be to limit parking to one side of the street. Nolan said one issue that continues to be discussed is if the City should require sidewalks.

Commissioner Scherer said if part of the living streets policy/ plan is to reduce traffic on local streets (which she understands) in her opinion it shouldn't be limited to only local streets. Scherer said in all instances cut through traffic should be discouraged not only on local streets but local collector and even minor arterials shouldn't be used as cut through when the highway roadway system doesn't work. Continuing, Scherer stated in her opinion the City should work on limiting cut through traffic period. Scherer stated she lives in the foothills of Indian Hills and because of what's occurring on the highways vehicle traffic is using any means it can to "break through" adding it took her over ½ hour to get to Edina City Hall via Vernon Avenue. Concluding, Scherer said while the City is "working" on a policy/plan the City should take the opportunity to alleviate pass through traffic of any kind on all City streets. Nolan commented he agrees this would be the time for the City to take the opportunity to influence it.

Commissioner Platteter commented that he along with Commissioner Carr are members of the "living Street" advisory team and said the work on establishing a plan is ongoing and gradual as things evolve. Carr agreed pointing out as an example of continued study is the issue of boulevard trees (should it be encouraged). Commissioner Schroeder stated in his opinion the overview of living streets should also include sidewalks with the variable being the boulevard. Schroeder pointed out if boulevards are established as important the issue of "who maintains" them would become a legitimate issue. He further noted if the City requires the "traditional" boulevard with trees sidewalk maintenance costs would need to be considered. Nolan said he agrees that the large issue in all of this would be maintenance costs.

Chair Staunton said it's probably difficult to adjust from "what we have" to "what we want to have". Staunton noted in the Grandview Framework that plan touched on sidewalks and the implementation of street calming on Vernon Avenue.

A discussion ensued with Commissioners noting there needs to be a way to better define the public realm and the connections to it, individual private properties and public properties. Commissioners said they were impressed with the work that was done on "Living Streets" and look forward to its completion. Continuing, Commissioners noted that part of the policy/plan should include education, adding the message of "Living Streets" needs to get out to the community. The more people that know about the City's living streets policy/plan the more

the plan would be incorporated into future developments and redevelopments, both public and private

Chair Staunton reported there is also an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan “sidewalk policy/plan circulating within the City and residents should be aware that a public hearing on amending the sidewalk plan will be scheduled before the Planning Commission sometime in October. Staunton reported that hearing was going to be this evening; however, the Engineering Department which is the department that oversees transportation wasn’t ready.

Chair Staunton thanked Commissioners Carr and Platteter for serving on the living streets advisory team. Staunton suggested if Commissioners have additional comments and/or ideas on the plan they should pass them along to Platteter and Carr. Nolan reported that the goal of the advisory team is to have a work session with the City Council and formalize the plan for final Council action.

Chair Staunton thanked Nolan for his report.

B. Work Plan – 2015

Discussion

Chair Staunton told the Commission it’s time to begin finalizing the 2015 Work Plan. Staunton asked Planner Teague the timing on this.

Planner Teague responded he would like the work plan finalized sometime in September; however, he pointed out the Commission only meets once in September due to a religious holiday. Teague referred to the Work Plan and asked Commissioners if things need to be added or removed. Teague pointed out there is an addition to the work plan on conducting a small area plan for the Cahill and 70th Street neighborhood. Teague informed Commissioners the addition of the small area plan for Cahill/70th is at the direction of the City Council. Concluding Teague said monies are available for this district so it’s a good time to get started.

Chair Staunton asked Commissioners Forrest and Lee how work on the Wooddale Valley View Road small area plan was going. Forrest responded that the advisory group is focusing on completing it by the end of this year or January 2015. Staunton said he believes it would be beneficial to keep the Wooddale and Valley View small area plan on the 2015 work plan.

Commissioner Carr commented that while Step I on Lighting is slated to be added to the Ordinance in her opinion it would be good to keep Lighting on the 2015 work plan. She said implementing Step I (as proposed) is only the first step in a number of steps the City could include in a lighting ordinance. Carr reiterated her suggestion of keeping lighting on the 2015 work plan. Commissioners agreed.

Chair Staunton said under A. Zoning Ordinance Amendments it may be wise to make grading and drainage first on the list with lighting and parking regulations/proof of parking second and

third. Continuing, Staunton noted the items under Policy Recommendation and suggested changing up the priority as follows: 1. Tree Ordinance/landscaping; 2. Living Streets – Bringing buildings up to the street and connectivity of buildings to public realm; 3) Density in the Southdale area; 4) Mid Term Comp Plan Consideration (wait for Visioning process); 5) Sustainability enforcement/PUD/Ped. Friendly/affordable housing and 6) Monitoring Residential Redevelopment standards and ordinances. Staunton pointed out with respect to item 6 that the Commission is close to amending the ordinances and redevelopment standards and would want to continue meeting with the redevelopment coordinator, Cindy Larsen on a regular basis.

A discussion ensued on the proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance (public hearing 10/8) and on establishing a storm water maintenance plan/policy. Commissioners stressed while they understand the interface between Planning, Building and Engineering on the drainage issues they believe this is of significant importance and is a high priority. The discussion continued with Commissioners referring to the previous work session on drainage and if another work session should be scheduled on drainage or if it should be discussed this evening.

Commissioner Platteter noted for him the issue of drainage and storm water management is most important and questioned how the Commission can “get” their suggestions and ideas into a policy/plan. Planner Teague interjected adding, Planning, Building and Engineering staff continues to work on this issue. He further added that he along with the building official is considering the implementation of a residential checklist clarifying for applicants what’s required.

Chair Staunton asked the Commission to share their thoughts on the drainage/storm water maintenance policy/plan and if after this evening Commissioners have further suggestions/recommendations they should pass those suggestions along to Planner Teague.

Commissioner Scherer said from their work session discussion she would like to suggest that watershed review and/or approval (when required) should be added to some form of checklist. Scherer stated she wants residents and developers to know that the City takes drainage issues seriously; reiterating the need for creating a check list that includes watershed district review/approval and other items. Continuing, Scherer referred to a statement from the work session that requires properties that have installed rain gardens and/or other specific drainage plans that it is required to be recorded on the Title. Scherer said if a “rain garden” is recorded on the Title property owners would be aware of additional maintenance issues. Concluding, Scherer stated in her opinion the City should do whatever it takes to ensure proper storm water maintenance control and that it’s not just an “urban legend” in Edina.

Commissioner Lee stated at first glance she is a little bothered by the idea of requiring these drainage solutions (rain gardens) to be recorded on the deed. She pointed out the goal of the City should be to improve water runoff, adding she worries if a specific rain garden or whatever is recorded on the deed when new remedies are found the owner could be “stuck” with what’s on the deed and what “worked” best at a specific time; thereby minimizing newer remedies. Lee stated she would be more comfortable in taking the broadest approach possible. Lee concluded that in her opinion being too prescriptive could prevent new ideas from being

implemented; however, she believes there should be a checklist similar to the checklist on commercial applications. Lee suggesting that the City look at how other municipalities handles these issues.

Commissioner Platteter complimented the participation at the work session adding he believes drainage is trending in the right direction and further expressing he wants assurances on the following:

- Spot check site surveys, this would ensure that nothing is missing on surveys and puts everyone on notice that the City takes all survey requirements seriously;
- Indicate calculations on soil disturbance;
- As previously discussed develop a residential checklist for residents and builders similar to the list attached to commercial permits;
- Ensure that watershed district review is done if required. How would this be done; through the checklist?
- Define storm water; and
- Coordinate inspections, who, when, are all departments covered etc.

Commissioner Forrest commented that in Chapter 36, 1257 that language is vague so a checklist is important. Forrest further asked about complaints and how complaints are enforced. She said it would also be beneficial so a resident to know who to speak with if they are having drainage issues. Concluding, Forrest also suggested a check list on what is required on a survey.

Planner Teague responded that all ideas and suggestions are good. He informed Commissioners there is a residential checklist for survey requirements; however, staff realizes another checklist is needed to be attached to residential applications that guides applicants through the process on what is required when applying for a building permit. Teague stated all Planning applications have checklists and this is a good time to add a checklist to the residential building permit application.

A discussion ensued with Commissioners agreeing that some type of maintenance declaration recorded on the property is a good idea, adding it makes future buyers aware of a feature on their property that needs maintenance.

Commissioner Carr agreed checklists for both surveys and residential applications are needed and would greatly improve the process. Carr said all applicants need to be clear on the City's requirements; no ambiguity.

Planner Teague reiterated that all planning applications have a checklist, adding that developing a checklist for building permit applications is something departments would work together on. Teague suggested the possibility of having another work session focusing on developing a checklist for residential applications. Continuing Teague added he does have a concern with last minute revisions to building plans/surveys and keeping them straight. Teague said in all instances there is a period of time before an application is "deemed complete"; however, the

City can run into problems when revisions to plans/surveys are made after the fact and resubmitted.

Chair Staunton thanked everyone for their input, adding developing a checklist is the correct way to proceed. Staunton said he is a little unclear on if the Commission should weigh in on the content of the checklist or not, pointing out in reality that's a staff function. The focus for the Commission is land use. Commissioner Platteter agreed that he doesn't have the expertise on developing these checklists; however would like to see the final outcome.

Planner Teague informed the Commission City staff (building, planning, and engineering) would formulate a draft list and provide the Commission with a copy for their review before it is finalized.

Commissioner Forrest questioned if the Commission is making decisions without feedback from all stakeholders/residents/builders/development/surveyors. She said she wonders as mentioned by Staunton if this was outside the Commissions realm of land use.

A discussion ensued with Commissioners supporting the maintenance declaration on deeds and that creating a residential application checklist was good. Commissioners noted that clarity is extremely important and that further study needs to occur on what happens during the transition period (pulling a permit and getting the final certificate of occupancy). Continuing, Commissioners wondered if maybe there was a legitimate reason residential is treated differently from commercial on the building permit end; however, this is a beginning. It was noted that much of the current concerns appear to be about storm water runoff and water quality. It was further suggested that the Commission look at a better way to encourage the use of pervious surfaces (which may trigger an ordinance change).

Chair Staunton suggested that staff "take another stab" at the 2015 work plan and bring the draft back for further review.

C. Zoning Ordinance Amendments

Staff Comments

Planner Teague addressed the Commission and explained that the continuing work on amending the zoning ordinance continues with the Commission zeroing in on four topics. 1) Front setback, 2) one-foot rule for tear down/rebuild, 3) elimination of the minimum and maximum unit size for multi-family housing and 4) adopt part A of lighting ordinance. Teague said after discussion and formalization of the ordinance amendments the Planning Commission would hold a public hearing. Teague said the public hearing date is tentatively scheduled for the Planning Commission meeting on the 8th of October. In concluding, Teague noted that item 2, (one-foot rule) was adopted in response to a moratorium on variances; that moratorium has been lifted and the Commission has expressed the desire to return this back to a variance process

Chair Staunton invited the Commission to comment on the proposed changes.

Discussion

A brief discussion ensued on the Established Front Street Setback with Commissioners agreeing that the proposed changes would add clarity; however, it was noted that Edina has some unique streetscapes that haven't been specifically addressed and in those instances the property owner can request a variance.

Further discussion continued on paragraph (7) page 2; clarifying that it relates to the present Conditional Use Permit Process and the "One-Foot Rule". Planner Teague said it is the hope that the Conditional use Permit one-foot rule process is eliminated and handled through the variance process (as it was prior to the moratorium). Teague explained that staff would remove the language drafted for the conditional use permit process one-foot rule and incorporate it into the variance process. Teague said that the one-foot rule conditions are very good and they should remain in ordinance form; however, moved to the variance process. Commissioners agreed noting the increase in request for Conditional Use Permit because of the 1-foot requirement.

Planner Teague also noted the implementation of Step 1 Lighting and the request by the Commission for continued study.

The discussion ensued on unintended consequences with the Commission acknowledging an ordinance can't be written to address every issue.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITIONS

Chair Staunton acknowledged back of packet materials.

VIII. CHAIR AND COMMISSION COMMENTS

Chair Staunton introduced and welcomed new Planning Commissioner Steve Hobbs. Hobbs said he was excited to be "on board" and looks forward to working with the Commission.

Commissioner Lee updated the Commission on the progress of Wooddale Valley View small area plan. Lee said a public discovery workshop will be held on the 4th of October from 8-12 at the Senior Center. Lee said all are welcome to attend. Continuing, Lee said their goal as previously mentioned in the work plan discussion is to finalize the plan by the end of 2014 and present it to the Council in January or February 2015. Forrest also informed Commissioners that the planning team meets on the off-Wednesdays in the Edina Community Room between 6-8 PM. Forrest said public and Commissioners are always welcome to attend those meetings.

IX. STAFF COMMENTS

Planner Teague reported that in response to the Grandview RFI four companies were chosen as finalists; Frauenshuh, Doren Co., Greco Development and Kraus Anderson.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Lee moved meeting adjournment at 9:30 PM. Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion. All voted aye; motion carried.

Respectfully submitted